

CONAN THE  
BARBARIAN

MARVEL COMICS GROUP



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# CONAN

## THE BARBARIAN

PERHAPS  
YOU FOUND  
THOSE DOGS  
AN EASY PREY,  
CIMMERIAN--

BUT NOW, YOU  
ARE CORNERED--  
TRAPPED BY THE  
**VULTURE!**



**SWORDS  
IN THE  
NIGHT!**

Stan Lee  
PRESENTS:

# CONAN THE BARBARIAN

ROY THOMAS WRITER/EDITOR and BARRY SMITH ARTIST \* BUSCEMA, ADKINS, & STONE INKERS

## The SHADOW of the VULTURE

A WESTLING WIND  
CURLS LISTLESSLY  
THRU THE STREETS AND  
ALLEYS OF THE CITY  
CALLED PAN-DISHAH,  
SOME THREE WEEKS' RIDE  
FROM TURAN-BESIEGED  
MAKKALET.

AND HERE, ON THE  
MARBLED STEPS OF  
THE PALACE ROYAL  
ITSELF, THERE IS  
BLOOD AND BATTLE  
THIS SUN-SCORCHED  
DAY...

OUT OF  
MY WAY,  
DOGS  
OF THE  
EAST!

I'LL SEE  
YOUR  
PRECIOUS  
KING--  
AND I'LL  
SEE HIM  
NOW!!

Freely adapted from  
the story by  
ROBERT E. HOWARD  
creator of Conan

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YOU, FELLOW!  
ARE YOU IN  
CHARGE OF  
THIS  
RABBLE?

THEN  
TELL  
THEM TO  
GIVE  
WAY!

TALONS OF ERLIK! BEFORE  
I TAKE ORDERS FROM  
SOME DUST-CAKED  
BARBARIAN FRESH  
OFF THE ROAD, I'LL--

CROM TAKE  
YOU FOR A  
FOOL--!



I'VE COME WITH  
A MESSAGE  
FROM YOUR  
KING'S OWN  
DAUGHTER!

AND I'LL TAKE  
IT TO HIM,  
OR KNOW THE  
REASON--



...WHY.



HAH!  
THAT'S  
MORE  
LIKE IT.

NOW, I THINK I'LL  
HAVE MY MEN  
RUN YOU THRU  
LIKE A DOG, DOG!



BY ISHTAR,  
I KNEW I  
SHOULD  
HAVE  
RIDDEN  
WEST,  
INSTEAD  
OF COMING  
HERE.

AND, IF I'D NOT MADE A  
VOW TO EANNATUM,  
IN EXCHANGE FOR MY  
FREEDOM--

EANNATUM? THEN--  
YOU'VE COME FROM  
MAKKALET?

SO I'VE BEEN  
TRYING TO SAY!



THEN COME WITH US  
--BUT LEAVE YOUR  
BROADSWORD LYING  
ON THE FLOOR!

KING GHANNIF  
WILL SEE  
YOU, AND IF HE  
BELIEVES  
YOUR STORY...



...YOU MAY EVEN  
RIDE OUT OF  
PAH-DISHAH  
ALIVE.



WAIT HERE,  
WHILE I SEE  
IF THE KING  
IS...  
INDISPOSED.

IF HE TRIES TO  
FLEE, MEN--  
GUT HIM!





WON'T TALK, EH, MY FINE LAD?

NEVER FEAR, NEVER FEAR...  
THE PROMISED TROOPS WILL  
BE **DISPATCHED**, AND  
HERE'S A **PITTANCE** FOR  
YOUR TRAVAILS.

NOW,  
**ENTER-  
TAIN US  
WITH  
TALES--**

-- ABOUT --

**TARIM'S  
BLOOD!** THE  
HEATHEN JUST  
TOOK MY SACK  
OF GOLD-- AND  
**WALKED OUT!**

HE DIDN'T  
EVEN **KISS  
MY HAND!**

I'LL **SEE**  
TO HIM,  
EXALTED ONE!

YOU **INSOLENT SAVAGE!**  
GET BACK IN THERE!

EITHER  
SHEATHE  
YOUR  
**TONGUE,**  
DOG...

YOU WERE  
NOT GIVEN  
**LEAVE**  
TO--

...OR ELSE  
UN**SHEATHE**  
YOUR  
**SWORD.**

YOU'VE **NO**  
OTHER CHOICE.

FOR A MOMENT IN  
THE STREETS BELOW,  
CONAN CONSIDERS  
SEEKING OUT A  
**TAVERN...**

...A FULL-  
BODIED  
**WENCH...**

BUT NO, THIS CITY  
STINKS TOO MUCH OF  
**CIVILIZATION...** AND  
**DECADENCE...** AND  
**HOLY WARS** FOUGHT  
OVER CAPTIVE **MAN-  
GODS.**

HE'S NO **STOMACH**  
FOR IT.

IT IS STARTING TO **RAIN**  
WHEN HE DRAWS NEAR A  
**FORK IN THE ROAD.**

WESTWARD LIES **MARMALET**,  
WHERE A SMILING YOUNG **QUEEN**  
GAVE HIM A **RUNE-STUDDED**  
**ARMLET** AS A PARTING GIFT...

...A GIFT WHICH  
LATER DREW A **STAR-  
SPAWNED TOAD-  
THING** TO HIM, AS  
A FLY TO HONEY.

**SOUTH,**  
THEN!

FOR, ONLY WHEN ONE IS  
**PENNYLESS** SHOULD HE  
SELL HIS **SWORD** TO MEN  
WHOSE WIVES HAVE TRIED  
TO **KILL** HIM.

NOT MUCH  
**SENSE** IN  
IT, OTHER-  
WISE...

LEAGUES DISTANT, AT THE WATER-EDGE OF THE EVER-BLAZING RIMS OF FIRE WHICH ENCIRCLES THE CITY-STATE CALLED **MARKKALET**...



...LIES THE GREAT SPRAWLING PAVILION OF WORLD-RAVENOUS YEZDIGERD.



EVEN YEZDIGERD, RUTHLESS HEIR-APPARENT TO THE THRONE OF TURAN, CAN SCARCELY REPRESS A SHUDDER AT THE DIMLY-ILLUMINED FORM WHICH NOW STANDS BEFORE HIM.

FOR THIS IS **MIKHAL OGLU**, WHOSE NAME IS A QUIVERING WATCHWORD OF HORROR ON BOTH SIDES OF THE STORM-CURSED **VILAYET SEA**.

**MIKHAL OGLU--MOST NOTED SLAYER IN A NATION OF SLAYERS...**

**MIKHAL OGLU--CALLED THE VULTURE!**

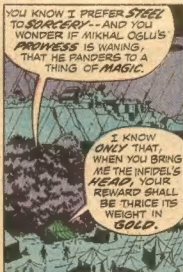
I AM HERE, MY PRINCE.

NOT EVEN THE FIERCE ZEMPESTS OF THE INLAND SEA COULD KEEP ME LONG FROM YOUR SIDE.

BETTER TO HAVE YOU AT MY SIDE, OLD FRIEND...

...THAN AT MY BACK.





CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE





**SOUTH OF MUCH-  
BELEAGUERED  
MAKKALET!**

**NEAR THE  
ZAPOROSKA  
RIVER, A TINY  
VILLAGE  
LIES SLEEPING...**

**AND, WITHIN A MUD-CAKED HUT, A  
FIGURE SNORES PEACEFULLY...**

**...AN EMPTY  
WINE-  
FLAGON  
BY HIS  
SIDE.**

**OUTLANDER!**

**WAKE UP,  
CONAN! THEY  
ARE NEARLY  
UPON US!**

**HUH?  
FILL MY  
FLASK,  
HOST,  
BEFORE  
I--**

**OH... IT'S  
YOU, IVGA.  
I'VE... NOT  
ANOTHER  
PENNY.**

**OH, CONAN--  
OH, FOOL--**

**IT ISN'T  
MONEY  
I WANT!**

**NO? THEN, BY CROM... YOU'LL  
BE THE FIRST SUCH IN THIS  
HOT-PALMED VILLAGE, SINCE  
I CAME HERE TO ROOST  
THREE DAYS AGO!**

**COME  
OUTSIDE--  
AND SEE! THE  
WHOLE COUNTRY-  
SIDE IS AFLAME!**

**WHAT IS  
IT, THEN?**

**WHAT??**

**MITRA TAKE  
ME! YOU  
SPOKE THE  
TRUTH!**

**MEN SAY IT'S  
TURANIANS--  
SOME OF THOSE  
WHOVE BESIEGED  
MAKKALET!**

**BUT WHY  
SO FAR  
SOUTH?**

**NO WAY TO  
KNOW, GIRL.  
THIS PLACE  
COULD HAVE  
NOTHING THAT  
YEZDIGERD  
WOULD WANT.**

**UNLESS  
HE RECALLS  
THE SCAR  
I GAVE  
HIM...**

**...AND HE  
WANTS...  
ME!**

**WELL, IF THAT'S  
THE CASE, WE'LL  
SLIP LIKE MICE  
FROM BETWEEN  
THE DEVIL'S  
FINGERS.**

**COME, WOMAN--  
MY HORSE WILL  
CARRY US  
BOTH!**

**BUT-- THE  
PEOPLE OF THE  
VILLAGE--?**

**THE MEN HAVE  
DRUNK THE ALE  
I'VE BOUGHT--  
AND THE WOMEN  
HAVE BEEN KIND--**

**BUT THIS NAG  
OF MINE WON'T  
CARRY THE WHOLE  
TOWN!**

**NOW  
COME!**

**YOU  
GO!!**

**I'LL  
STAY AND  
DIE WITH MY  
PEOPLE!**



THE TURANIANS WON'T KILL YOU, IVGA.

THEY'LL SELL YOU TO A FAT OLD ZAMORIAN MERCHANTS, WHO IN TURN--

NOW WHAT ARE YOU--?



CROM! THE PIGS HAVE RIDDEN AHEAD OF THEIR OWN FIRE!

THEY'VE STOLEN ON THE VILLAGE IN THE DARK!

OH, CONAN-- CONAN-- WHAT SHALL WE DO?



NOT FLEE OUT THE BACK, THAT'S FOR SURE!

THEY'VE EVEN FRIGHTENED OFF MY HORSE.



HURRY, GIRL! MAYBE THIS WAY-- IF THEY'RE NOT LOOKING FOR ME--!



THERE! THERE'S THE ONE WE SEEK!

AT HIM, DOGS!

FIVE HUNDRED ASPERS TO THE MAN WHO BRINGS ME HIS HEAD!



TH- THEY SEE US, CONAN! OH, PLEASE DON'T LET THEM--

EEEEEE

IVGA!



THE GIRL GOES LIMP IN CONAN'S GRASP, A FEATHERED ARROW STILL QUIVERING UNDER HER HEART.

HE NEEDS LOOK NO FURTHER TO KNOW THAT SHE IS DEAD.



SO HE TURNS HIS PANTHER-ISH GLARE, INSTEAD, THRU THE WINDOW--

--STAMPING FOREVER ON HIS BARBARIAN MEMORY--



--THE FACE AND FORM OF MIKHAL OGLU--THE VULTURE!

THEN, AN UNBROKEN WAVE OF MOUNTED ARCHERS RISES SUDDENLY UP BETWEEN THEM--



AND, AS A BEAR GIVES WAY BEFORE THE ONSET OF THE HUNTERS, HE TURNS AND FLEES--

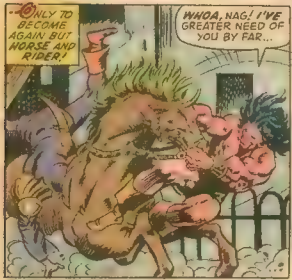


--OUT THE NOW-UNGUARDED REAR OF THE HUT--



--WHERE A DARK CENTAUR FORM LOOMS FOR A MOMENT IN THE FIRE-SHOT DARKNESS--

--ONLY TO BECOME AGAIN BUT HORSE AND RIDER!



WHOA, NAG! I'VE GREATER NEED OF YOU BY FAR...

...THAN THIS TURANIAN DOG!

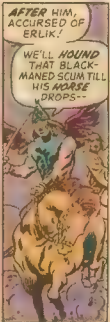


NOW, EASY, BOY... WE'RE RIDING OUT OF THIS HELL...



AND, SINCE THE NORTH SEEMS THE ONLY WAY OPEN TO US

NORTHWARD IT IS!



AFTER HIM, ACCURSED OF ERLIK!

WE'LL HOUND THAT BLACK-MANED SCUM TILL HIS HORSE DROPS--



--OR TILL WE HERD HIM TO THE GATES OF MANY-TOWERED MARKALET ITSELF!!

MARKALET:



CONAN HAS HOPED NEVER TO LAY EYES ON IT AGAIN.

BUT NOW, DAYS LATER, WITH A HUNDRED SWORDS AT HIS BACK, IT LOOKS DECEDELY SWEETER TO HIM...



...AND WILL LOOK FAR SWEETER, IF HE LIVES LONG ENOUGH TO ENTER IT!

FOR, HIS HORSE IS TIRED...

WHILE FRESH MEN AND MOUNTS NOW GIVE PURSUIT FROM THE TURANIAN CAMP!

FASTER, YOU WORTHLESS NAG!

FASTER!

FAS--

CROM!

YEZDIGERD'S RIDERS ARE HARD UPON CONAN NOW...

AND THE GATES OF MAKKALET SEEM NOT UNLIKE THE PORTALS OF FABLED HEAVEN ITSELF...

GATES WHICH SUDDENLY OPEN BEFORE HIM...

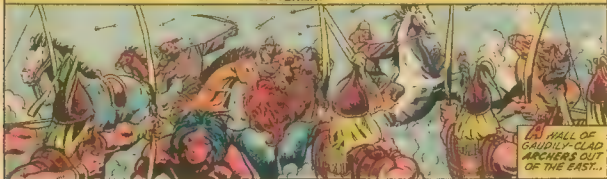
NO SPEW FORTH BROAD-BLADED DEATH!

NO, DOG-BROTHERS! LET'S SHOW THE GUTLESS PIGS HOW THE WARRIORS OF PAN-DISHAN CAN FIGHT!

BY TARIM, WE'LL GIVE THE DEVILS SCARLET WINE TO DRINK THIS DAWN...

...OR MY NAME'S NOT RED SONJA!

WHEN, ON THE INSTANT, A SECOND WALL REARS ITSELF 'TWTX STUNNED CIMMERIAN AND THE TROOPS OF TURAN:



A HALL OF GAUDILY-CLAD ARCHERS OUT OF THE EAST...

...AND, IN THE FOREFRONT, A RED-HAIRED SNE-DEVIL MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THE FLAMES OF HELL...



A GIRL WHOSE SAVAGE CUTTING AND SLASHING STIRS CONAN'S BLOOD--BEYOND ALL REASON!

THIS WAY, MAN--!

LOOSE THAT HAND-- OR LOSE IT!



NO ONE FIGHTS ALL MY BATTLES FOR ME--



--LEAST OF ALL A WENCH WHO SHOULD BE TENDING A HEARTH SOMEWHERE!

STILL, THERE ARE UNSPOKEN BONDS FORGED IN THE BLAZING HEAT OF COMBAT--AND SOON, EVEN AS THE TURANIANS RETREAT, SO DOES CONAN'S ANGER.

HAN! LOOK AT ALL THE YELLOW DOGS RUN!

NOT ALL OF THEM, GIRL.



CROM, BUT THIS WAS THIRSTY WORK!

WHAT WAS THAT NAME AGAIN, WOMAN?

THEY CALL ME RED SONJA-- THEY THAT SPEAK OF ME AT ALL.

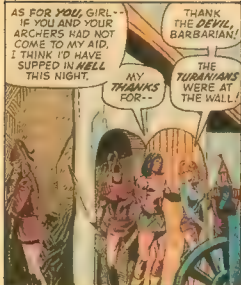
SON-YA?



WELL, YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING, SON-YA...

TURAN WILL NOT SOON FORGET THE WARRIORS OF PANDISHAN!





AS FOR YOU, GIRL--  
IF YOU AND YOUR  
ARCHERS HAD NOT  
COME TO MY AID,  
I THINK I'D HAVE  
SUPPED IN HELL  
THIS NIGHT.

THANK  
THE DEVIL,  
BARBARIAN!

MY  
THANKS  
FOR--

THE  
TURANIANS  
WERE AT  
THE WALL!



I'M A SOLDIER IN THE SERVICE  
OF KING GHANNIF OF PAH-  
DISHAH.

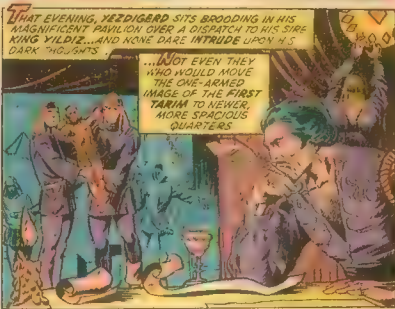
I MERELY  
DID WHAT  
I AM  
PAID  
WELL  
TO DO.



FOR ALL I  
CARE, YOU'D  
NOW BE LYING  
HEADLESS  
AT THE CITY  
GATE.



SHUT UP,  
DOG.



THAT EVENING, YEZDIGERD SITS BROODING IN HIS  
MAGNIFICENT PAVILION OVER A DISPATCH TO HIS SIRE  
KING YILDIZ...AND NONE DARE INTRUDE UPON HIS  
DARK THOUGHTS.

...NOT EVEN THEY  
WHO WOULD MOVE  
THE ONE-ARMED  
IMAGE OF THE FIRST  
TARIM TO NEWER,  
MORE SPACIOUS  
QUARTERS



AND MEAN-  
WHILE, MIKHAL  
OGLU SUMMONS  
THE MOST  
SKILLED OF HIS  
AGHRAPUR-  
TRAINED  
ARCHERS...



AND BIDS  
HIM SHOOT  
A VERY  
CERTAIN  
SHAFT...



...UNTO A  
VERY  
CERTAIN  
PART OF  
THE CITY...



WHERE  
CERTAIN HANDS  
ARE WAITING.

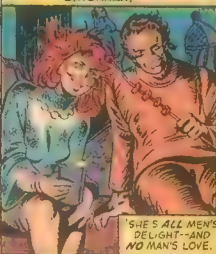


**A**S, WITHIN THE WALLS, CONAN STANDS PONDERING THE UNGUARDED WORDS OF A HALF-DRUNK BOWMAN OUT OF PAK-DISHAH



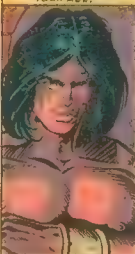
RED SONTAP  
AYE, SHE'S  
A DEVIL,  
THAT ONE--

"DRINKS THE STRONGEST MAN UNDER  
THE TABLE--AND OUTSWEARS A  
ZINGARAN!"



SHE'S ALL MEN'S  
DELIGHT--AND  
NO MAN'S LOVE.

"FORGET HER, CIMMER-  
IAN... AND FINISH  
YOUR ALE!"



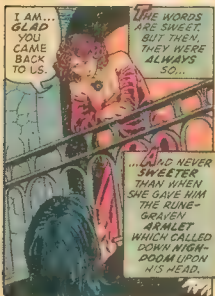
I SAID SHUT UP!



CONAN....?

SHE HAS  
WANDERED  
UNTHINKING  
ONTO THE  
PALACE  
GROUNDS.

AND IT IS  
MELISSANDRA  
WHO SPEAKS...  
GIRLISH QUEEN  
OF THIS SORE-  
BESET CITY.



I AM...  
GLAD  
YOU  
CAME  
BACK  
TO US.

THE WORDS  
ARE SWEET.  
BUT THEN,  
THEY WERE  
ALWAYS  
SO...

...AND NEVER  
SWEETER  
THAN WHEN  
SHE GAVE HIM  
THE RUIN-  
GRAVEN  
ARMLET  
WHICH CALLED  
DOWN NIGH-  
DOOM UPON  
HIS HEAD.



ONE DARES  
NOT RAISE A  
BLOODIED  
SWORD  
AGAINST A  
QUEEN,  
EVEN A  
TRAITOROUS  
ONE.

BUT, SOME DAY...  
PERHAPS FAR SOONER  
THAN ONE THINKS...



COME IN FROM THE TERRACE, MY  
DEAR. THE WIND IS FROM THE  
NORTH...

YOU'LL  
CATCH  
YOUR  
DEATH.



THE NIGHT IS STILL DARK, AND THE TAVERN  
YET FILLED WITH BOISTEROUS SHOUTING--  
WHEN SUDDENLY, A 5-0-IT MORE LOUD THAN  
ANY IS HEARD--!

NO, BROTHERS! THE  
DEVILS ATTACK ANEW--  
AT THE SOUTHWEST  
WALL!

THEN THAT'S  
WHERE THEY'LL  
DIE!



YOU!  
BARBARIAN!  
COME WITH  
ME!

MUMM? I KNOW  
YOU  
YOU'RE WARAM-  
PYR,  
COMMANDER  
OF THE KING'S  
OWN GUARD.

BUT WHY  
ARE YOU  
PRESSED SO?



YOU'LL DO  
WELL NOT  
TO ASK  
QUESTIONS  
OF YOUR  
SUPERIORS

...BUT MERELY  
TO FOLLOW,  
TO WHERE  
YOU ARE  
NEEDED!



HERE, MY  
FRIEND, IS WHERE  
YOU'LL DO THE  
MOST GOOD!

THIS STINKING  
ALLEYWAY? WHAT  
ARE YOU UP TO  
MAN?

TELL ME--  
OR BY CROM,  
WHATEVER  
YOUR RANK,  
I'LL--

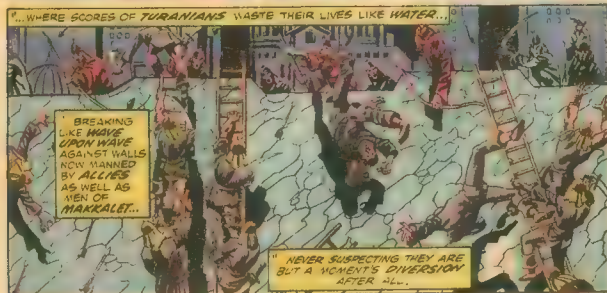


YOU'LL WHAT,  
BARBARIAN??



WELL  
STRUCK,  
MY SON, NOW  
COME.

THERE ARE  
MORE WAYS  
INTO THIS CITY  
THAN THE  
SOUTHWEST  
WALL...



...WHERE SCORES OF TURANIANS WASTE THEIR LIVES LIKE WATER...

BREAKING  
LIKE WAVE  
UPON WAVE  
AGAINST WALLS  
NOW MANNED  
BY ALLIES  
AS WELL AS  
MEN OF  
MAKKALET...

"NEVER SUSPECTING THEY ARE  
BUT A MOMENT'S DIVERSION  
AFTER ALL."

AWAKENING AT LENGTH, CONAN IS AWARE OF A RAGING THIRST... AN ACHING HEAD...



...AND TWO DARK FORMS ILLUMINED ONLY BY A LANTERN'S BLINKING EYE.

MIKHAL OGLU WILL REWARD US GREATLY FOR NETTING THIS FISH, EH, RHUPEN?

FATHER-- THE MERCENARY DOG IS AWAKE!



MUCH GOOD MAY IT DO HIM-- WITH MIKHAL OGLU EAGER FOR HIS HEAD! HE'S NOT SAFE IN THE MARBLED ARMS OF MAK- KALET NOW...



...BUT EAST OF THE CITY, IN A WATCH-STATION WHICH BOTH SIDES THINK LONG SINCE ABANDONED...



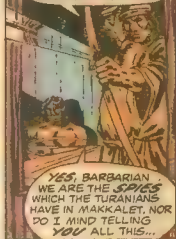
...AND WHERE ONE GUARD IS ALL WE NEED TO KEEP US SAFE FROM DETECTION.



YOUR MESSAGE SIRE...

IT'S BOUND TO MY SNAKE, AS YOU ORDERED.

THEN FIRE IT INTO THE THICKET YONDER, AS ON THE NIGHT WE WARNED YEZZIGERD THAT A CERTAIN WHARF WOULD BE UNGUARDED.

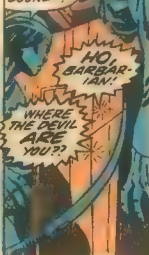


YES, BARBARIAN. WE ARE THE SPIES WHICH THE TURANIANS HAVE IN MAKKALET. NOR DO I MIND TELLING YOU ALL THIS...



FOR, NO ONE CAN HELP YOU OUT HERE!

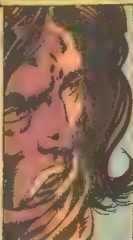
FATHER! THAT SOUND--?



HO, BARBARIAN!

WHERE THE DEVIL ARE YOU??

EVEN AS HE WORKS HIS SNAKE LOOSE, CONAN RECOGNIZES THE STRIDENT VOICE--



-- AND RESPONDS IN KIND:

IN HERE!



HURRY-- BUT TAKE CARE!!





DON'T SEEK TO GIVE **RED SON-YA** ADVICE, YOU NORTHLAND SAVAGE!

NOT WHEN IT'S **YOU** WHO'RE TRUSSSED UP LIKE A SWINE ALL SET FOR **FEAST-DAY!** I--

SO, EVEN A **TRAITOROUS** DOG CAN HAVE **PUPS**, I SEE.



**RED-HAIRED WITCH!**

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE **INTERFERED** IN MATTERS WHICH DON'T **CONCERN** YOU!

I MUST BE GROWING **DEAF**, BOY...



I DIDN'T HEAR MYSELF GIVE YOU LEAVE TO **SPEAK!**



**WATCH** IT, GIRL! THE **OLD** DOG TOO, HAS **FANGS**.

I'LL SAY IT **ONCE MORE**, CIMMERIAN...



DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO **DO!**

YOUR WORDS ARE **SHARP**, WOMAN.



LUCKILY, SO'S YOUR **DAGGER**.



NOW, SINCE **YOU** SEEM TO BE HAVING TIME ENOUGH JUST KEEPING **NARAM-PYR** BUSY...

I'M **TOYING** WITH HIM, MERELY.

A GIRL'S GOT TO HAVE HER **SPURT**, DOESN'T SHE?



ALL THE **SAME**, I'LL JUST--

**NOW** WHAT ARE YOU GAPING AT, **CONAN**?

**NOTHING**, SON-YA...



...JUST A FOOL OF A GUARD, WHO DIDN'T KNOW WHEN HE WAS WELL-OFF!



YOU TWO FIGHT LIKE FIENDS FROM THE PIT!

BUT I'LL DIE FIGHTING, BEFORE--

NO YOU WON'T!

GET OUT OF MY WAY, BARBARIAN!



NO! YOU'D SPLIT HIS OVER-RIPE BULLET...

AND I WANT HIM ALIVE!

ALIVE? WHAT FOR?



LISTEN WELL, GIRL, AND I'LL TELL YOU A STORY--ABOUT A MAN WHO VALUES MY HEAD EVEN MORE THAN I DO.

I'M LISTENING.



NOT LONG AFTERWARD, A TRIO OF BRIGHTLY-GARBED RIDERS APPROACH THE LONELY OUT-TOWER...

...SLOWLY, AND WITH MUFFLED HOOF-BEATS...



...AS SOFT AS GENTLY-FALLING RAIN.



STAY, BROTHERS. I'LL SAVOR THIS HARD-WON TRIUMPH ALONE.



WAIT HERE TILL I RETURN.



"... A LAND OF  
DARKNESS...  
AND  
DEEP NIGHT!"



**EPILOGUE:** FEW MEN NOTICE WHEN EVENING FALLS AGAIN ON THE PAVILIONS OF THE TURANIAN CAMP... FOR THE GOLDEN SPLENDOR OF PRINCE YEZDIGERD MAKES THE NIGHT SCARCELY LESS GLORIOUS THAN THE DAY...



AH, SULIMAR, DEAR COUNCILOR... IT IS WELL THAT MIKHAI OGLU ARRIVED WITH THESE TRIFLES FROM AGHRAPUR, EH?

THEY ARE... PLEASANT, MY PRINCE.



NOW, IF HE WOULD BUT BRING ME ONE THING MORE...

AND ALL THE EAST KNOWS WHAT THAT ONE THING IS, SIRE.



BUT HOLD! A STRANGER COMES... IN RAGGED MAKKALET GARB!



HE CARRIES WORD, NO DOUBT, FROM THOSE WITHIN THE CITY WHO ARE OUR FRIENDS.

LET HIM DRAW NEAR, THEN.

DON'T STOP DANCING, WENCH!



HO, FELLOW! WHO ARE YOU --

-- AND WHY HAVE YOU VENTURED INTO THE WAR-CAMP OF YEZDIGERD?

MY NAME IS RHUPEN, GREAT ONE...



